

TARZAN THE TERRIBLE

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THIS BEGINS THE STORY

Tarzan, the ape-man, who has realized life in Lord Greystoke, has learned that his wife, thought dead, is a captive in an African jungle, and he searches for her. He is a man of a "mean thing," a jungle he saves a long tail, from a lion. A creature-man kills the lion.

The almost human friendship established between the ape-man and the lion. In his search for the man he encounters Tarzan, a man and other beasts supposed to be a creature-man. As a creature, with whom he sympathizes, he moves about upon the narrow terraces that broke the lines of the buildings which seemed to be a peculiar, no doubt, to some extent, a concession, no doubt, to some extent, to their early cliff-dwelling propensities.

AND HERE IT CONTINUES

TARZAN was not surprised that at a short distance he aroused no suspicion or curiosity in the minds of those who passed him, since, until closer scrutiny was possible, there was little to distinguish him from a native creature-man. He passed from a native creature-man to a human form, formulated a plan of action, and, having decided, he did not hesitate in the carrying out of his plan.

With the same assurance that you might venture upon the main street of a neighboring city Tarzan strode into the Ho-don city of A-lur. The first person to detect his unusualness was a child playing in the arched gateway of one of the walled buildings. "No tail! no tail!" it shouted, throwing a stone at him, and as he suddenly grew dumb and its eyes wide as it sensed that this creature was something other than a mere Ho-don warrior who had lost his tail. With a gasp and a cry of alarm it fled screaming into the courtyard of its home.

Tarzan continued on his way, fully realizing that the moment was imminent when the fact would be discovered and he long to wait, since at the next turning of the winding street he came face to face with a Ho-don warrior. He saw the sudden surprise in the latter's eyes, followed instantly by one of suspicion, but before the fellow could speak Tarzan addressed him. "I am a stranger from another land," he said, "I would speak with the king, your king."

The fellow stepped back, laying his hand upon his knife. "There are no strangers that come to the gates of A-lur," he said, "other than as eunuchs or slaves."

"I come neither as a slave nor an eunuch," replied Tarzan. "I come directly from Jad-ben-Otho. Look!" and he held out his hand, which differed from the other's in that it was hairy and long-fingered, and then wheeled about that the other might see that he was tailless, for it was upon this fact that his plan had been based to his recollection of the quarrel between Jad-ben-Otho and On-at, in which the Waz-don had claimed that Jad-ben-Otho had a long tail while the Ho-don had been equally willing to fight for his faith in the taillessness of his god.

The warrior's eyes widened and an expression of awe crept into them, though it was still tinged with suspicion. "Jad-ben-Otho!" he murmured, and then, "It is true that you are an author Ho-don nor Waz-don, and it is also true that Jad-ben-Otho has no tail. Come," he said, "I will take you to Ko-tan, for this is a matter in which no common warrior may interfere. Follow me," and still clutching the handle of his knife and keeping a wary side glance upon the ape-man he led the way through A-lur.

The city consisted of a number of walled buildings, and a considerable distance between groups of buildings, and again they were quite close together. There were numerous imposing groups, evidently rising from the hills, often rising to a height of a hundred feet or more. As they advanced they saw numerous warriors and women, all of whom showed great curiosity in the stranger, but there was no attempt to menace him when it was found that he was being conducted to the palace of the king.

They came at last to a great pile that sprawled over a considerable area, its western front facing upon a large lake and evidently built from what had once been a natural cliff. This group of buildings was surrounded by a wall of considerably greater height than any Tarzan had before seen. His guide led him to a gateway through which waited a dozen or more warriors who had risen to their feet and formed a barrier across the entrance-way of the palace and his party curved around the corner of the palace wall, for by this time he had accumulated such a following of the curious as presented the appearance of a formidable mob.

The guide's story told, Tarzan was conducted into the courtyard, where he was held while one of the warriors entered the palace, evidently with the intention of notifying Ko-tan. Fifteen minutes later a large warrior appeared, followed by several others, all of whom strained Tarzan with every sign of curiosity as they approached.

The leader of the party halted before the ape-man. "Who are you?" he asked, "and what do you want of Ko-tan, the king?"

"I am a friend," replied the ape-man, "and I have come from the country of Jad-ben-Otho to visit Ko-tan of Pal-ul-don."

The warrior and his followers seemed impressed. Tarzan could see the latter whispering among themselves.

"How come you here, and what do you want of Ko-tan?"

Tarzan drew himself to his full height. "Enough!" he cried. "Must the messenger of Jad-ben-Otho be subjected to the treatment that might be accorded to a wandering Waz-don? Take me to the king at once lest the wrath of Jad-ben-Otho fall upon you."

There was some question in the mind of the ape-man as to how far he might carry his unwarranted show of assurance, and he waited therefore with amused interest the result of his demand. He did not, however, have long to wait, for almost immediately the attitude of his questioner changed. He widened, cast an apprehensive glance toward the eastern sky and then extended his right hand toward Tarzan, placing his left over his own heart in the sign of amity that was common among the peoples of Pal-ul-don.

Tarzan stepped quickly back, as though from a profane hand, a faint expression of horror and disgust upon his face.

"Stop!" he cried. "Who would dare touch the sacred person of one of the messengers of Jad-ben-Otho? Only as a special favor from Jad-ben-Otho may I permit you to receive this honor from me. Hasten! Already now the wrath of Jad-ben-Otho fall upon you."

He waited too long. What manner of reception the Ho-don of A-lur would extend to the son of his father! At first Tarzan had been inclined to adopt the role of Jad-ben-Otho himself, but it occurred to him that it might prove embarrassing and considerable of the character of a god, but it had suddenly occurred to him that the authority of the son of Jad-ben-Otho would be far greater than that of an ordinary messenger of a god, while at the same time giving him some lea-

son in the matter of his acts and demeanor, the ape-man reasoning that a young god would not be held so strictly accountable in the matter of his dignity and bearing as an older and greater god.

This time the effect of his words was immediately and painfully noticeable upon all those near him. With a gasp they shrank back, the spokesman almost collapsing in evident terror. His apologies, when finally the paralysis of his fear would permit him to voice them, were so abject that the ape-man could scarce repress a smile of amused contempt.

"Have mercy, O Dor-ul-Otho," he pleaded, "on poor old Dak-lot! Precede me and I will show you to where Ko-tan, the king, awaits you, trembling."

"Aside, snakes and vermin," he cried, pushing his warriors to right and left for the purpose of forming an avenue for Tarzan.

"Come!" cried the ape-man peremptorily, "lead the way, and let these others follow."

The now thoroughly frightened Dak-lot did as he was bid, and Tarzan of the Apes was ushered into the palace of Ko-tan, King of Pal-ul-don.

CHAPTER IX
Blood-stained Altars

The entrance through which he caught his first glimpse of the interior was a beautifully carved in geometric designs, and within the walls were similarly treated, though as he proceeded from one apartment to another he found the figures of animals, birds and men in the places among the more formal figures of the mural decorative art. Stone vessels were much in evidence as well as ornaments of gold and the skins of many animals, but nowhere did he see an indication of any woven fabric, indicating that in that respect at least the Ho-don were still low in the scale of civilization, and yet the proportions and arrangement of corridors and apartments bespoke a degree of civilization.

The way led through several apartments and long corridors, up at the end of three flights of stone stairs and finally out upon a ledge upon the western side of the building overlooking the blue lake. Along this ledge, or arcade, his guide led him for a hundred yards, stopping at last before a wide entrance-way leading into another apartment of the palace.

Here Tarzan beheld a considerable concourse of warriors in an enormous apartment, the domed ceiling of which was fully fifty feet above the floor. All most filling the chambers was a great pyramid ascending in broad steps well up under the dome, in which were a number of round apertures which let in the light. The steps of the pyramid were occupied by warriors to the very pinnacle, upon which stood a large, imposing figure of a man whose golden trappings shone brightly in the light of the afternoon sun, a shaft of which poured through one of the tiny apertures of the dome.

"Ko-tan!" cried Dak-lot, addressing the resplendent figure at the pinnacle of the pyramid. "Ko-tan and warriors of Pal-ul-don! Behold the honor that Jad-ben-Otho has done you in sending as his messenger his own son," and Dak-lot, stepping aside, indicated Tarzan with a dramatic sweep of his hand.

Ko-tan raised to his feet and every warrior within sight craned his neck to have a better view of the newcomer. Those upon the opposite side of the pyramid crowded to the front as the words of the old warrior reached them. Skeptical were the expressions on most of the faces; but there was a skepticism marked with caution. No matter which way fortune jumped they wished to be upon the right side of the fence. For a moment all eyes were centered upon Tarzan and then gradually they drifted to Ko-tan, for from his attitude would they receive the cue that would determine theirs. But Ko-tan was evidently in the same quandary as they—the very attitude of his body indicated it—it was one of indecision and of doubt.

The ape-man stood erect, his arms folded upon his broad breast, an expression of haughty disdain upon his handsome face; but to Dak-lot there seemed to be indications also of growing anger. The silence that was becoming oppressive glances at Tarzan and appealing ones at Ko-tan. The silence of the tomb wrapped the great chamber of the throne room of Pal-ul-don.

At last Ko-tan spoke. "Who says that he is Dor-ul-Otho?" he asked, casting a terrible look at Dak-lot.

"He does!" almost shouted that terrified noble.

"And so it must be true?" queried Ko-tan.

Could it be that there was a trace of irony in the chief's tone? Otho forbid! Dak-lot cast a side glance at Tarzan—a glance that he intended should carry the assurance of his own faith; but that succeeded only in impressing the ape-man with the other's pitiable terror.

"O Ko-tan!" pleaded Dak-lot, "your own eyes must convince you that indeed he is the son of Otho. Behold his godlike figure, his hands and his feet, that are not as ours, and that he is entirely tailless as is his mighty father."

Ko-tan appeared to be perceiving these facts for the first time and there was an indication that his skepticism was faltering. At that moment a young warrior who had pushed his way forward from the opposite side of the pyramid to where he could obtain a good look at Tarzan raised his voice.

"Ko-tan," he cried, "it must be even as Dak-lot says, for I am sure now that I have seen Dor-ul-Otho before. Yesterday as we were returning with the Kor-ul-lul prisoners we beheld him seated upon the back of a great gry. We hid in the woods before he came too near, but I saw enough to make sure that he who rode upon the great beast was none other than the messenger who stands here now."

This evidence seemed to be quite enough to convince the majority of the warriors that they indeed stood in the presence of deity—their faces showed it fully too plainly, and a sudden modesty that caused them to shrink behind their neighbors. As their neighbors were attempting to do the same thing, the result was a sudden melting away of those who stood upon the back of the ape-man until the steps of the pyramid directly before him lay vacant to the very apex and to Ko-tan. The latter, possibly influenced as much by the fearful attitude of his followers as by the evidence adduced, now altered his tone and his manner in such degree as might comport with the requirements if the stranger was indeed the Dor-ul-Otho whom he was saying his dignity as the populace of escape should it appear that he had entertained an impostor.

"If indeed you are the Dor-ul-Otho," he said, addressing Tarzan, "you will know that our doubts were but natural since we have received no sign from Jad-ben-Otho that he intended honoring us so greatly, nor how could we know, even, that the Great God had a son? If you are he, all Pal-ul-don rejoices to honor you; if you are not he, swift and terrible shall be the punishment of your treachery. I, Ko-tan, King of Pal-ul-don, have spoken."

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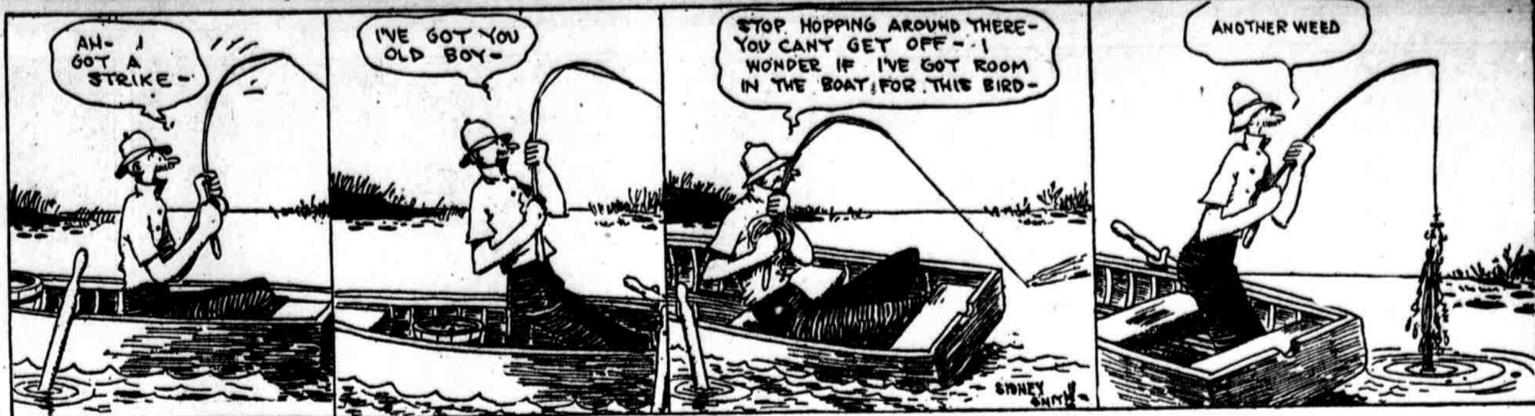
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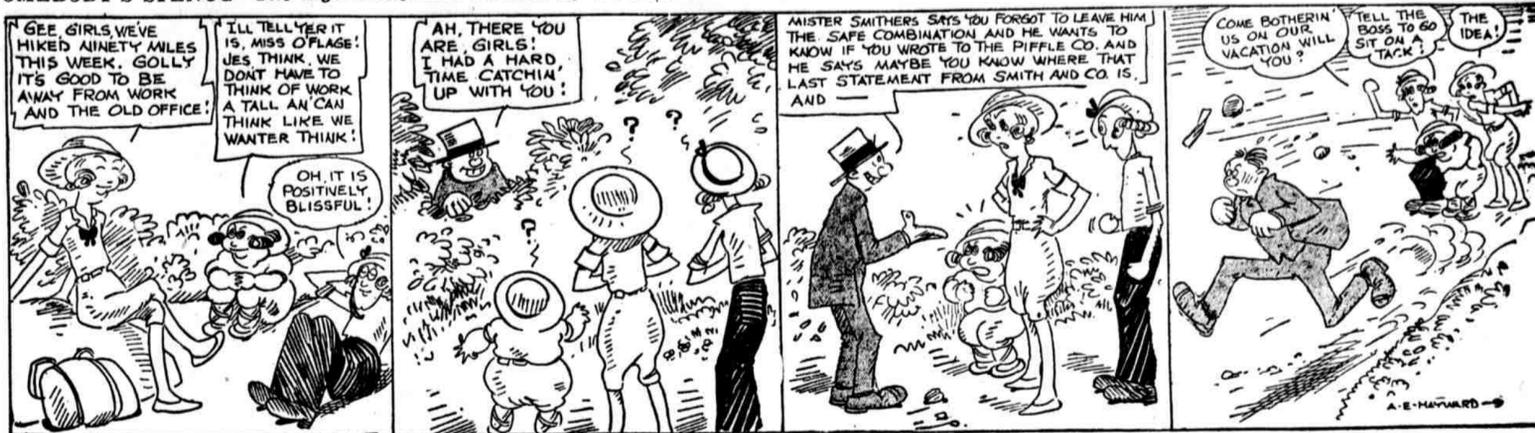
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THE GUMPS—Out of the Deep



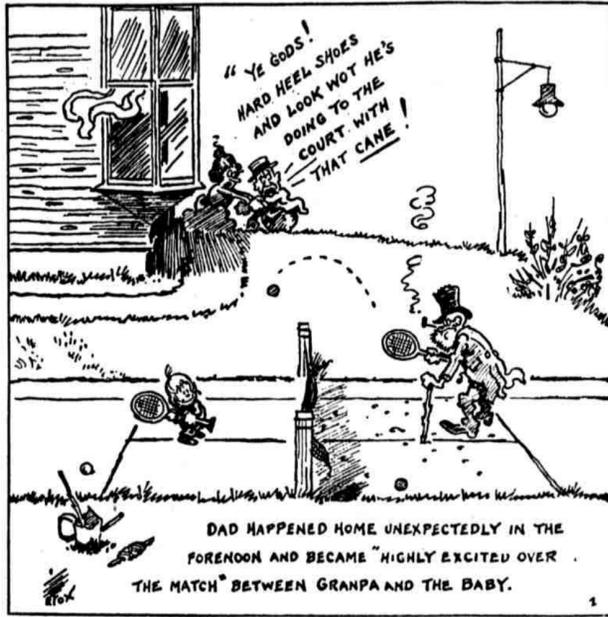
SOMEBODY'S STENOGRAPHER—The Mysterious Man Catches Up With the Girls



The Young Lady Across the Way



ON THE FAMILY TENNIS COURT



SCHOOL DAYS



PETEY—A Slight Mistake



THE CLANCY KIDS—The Mother's Nothing But a Ham Actor



CONTINUED MONDAY